

Worksession

Agenda Item #	7
Meeting Date	July 9, 2007
Prepared By	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager
Approved By	

Discussion Item	Proposed Policy on Use of Contractual Labor and Full-Time vs. Part-Time Employees
Background	<p>During the discussion of the proposed budget for FY08, Councilmember Seamens requested additional information concerning the City's part-time employees and the use of contractual labor. He wished to explore the feasibility of and the cost of using full-time employees in lieu of part-time and contractual labor in these instances.</p> <p>The Council discussed this matter on June 11, 2007. The Council agreed to increase the work hours of the Coordinator of Senior Recreation Programs to 30 hours per week, making the position eligible for fringe benefits. This change was made in light of the pending retirement of the incumbent.</p> <p>Because the issue of part-time staffing and contractual labor usage did not arise earlier in the budget process, the Council agreed to defer action on other staff positions. It was agreed that the Council would discuss Councilmember Seamens' proposal following adoption of the FY08 budget.</p> <p>To facilitate the Council's discussion of this matter, staff has prepared a summary of each department's use of part-time employees who work less than 20 hours per week and, consequently, do not receive benefits. Information on the use of contractual labor by the Public Works Department and the Communications Office is also provided.</p>
Policy	The Council establishes the City's overall personnel policies.
Fiscal Impact	<p>The cost of any modification in the City's current staffing will depend on the direction of the Council.</p> <p>As a service industry, slightly over half of the City's operating expenses are personnel-related. Staffing costs carry forward into future years; as wage rates and benefit costs increase, the impact on the City's operating costs is compounded over time.</p>
Attachments	Summary regarding City staffing and contractual labor usage
Recommendation	Staff recommends that the City discuss the use of contractual labor and full-time versus part-time employees and provide direction to staff relative to the adoption of a formal policy.
Special Consideration	<p>As noted in the attached summary, there are many instances where the City's operational requirements can only be met by the use of contractual labor and/or part-time employees.</p> <p>Additionally, it should be noted that there are a variety of reasons why individuals work in part-time or contractual positions. Some choose to do so to supplement their income from a full-time job. Others elect to work part-time or on a contractual basis</p>

	<p>to provide flexibility for other aspects of their lives, such as pursuing an educational degree, raising children, etc.</p> <p>Should the Council choose to adopt a formal policy regarding the City's use of part-time employees and contractual labor, these issues should be taken into account so as not to impact the City's ability to draw from a wider applicant pool.</p> <p>Any policy adopted by the Council must be applied on a fair and equitable basis in its application to similarly situated employees (i.e. those who work the same number of hours per week) regardless of the employee's personal circumstances.</p>
--	--

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK
PART-TIME STAFFING
AND CONTRACTUAL LABOR USAGE**

Library/Computer Learning Center

Staffing for the Library includes two part-time shelvers. Each of the shelvers is scheduled to work 15 hours/week. According to Library Director Ellen Arnold-Robbins, the aggregation of the two positions into one 30-hour per week position would not meet the department's operational requirements.

The Computer Learning Center is staffed by three part-time positions. One position is a 30-hour per week position that receives benefits. The other part-time employees are scheduled to work 10 hours per week and do not receive benefits.

One of the 10-hour per week employees works from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The other position provides coverage for the Computer Learning Center on weekends, working Saturdays from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sundays from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Aggregating these hours to create a position that receives benefits would not provide the necessary coverage for the Computer Learning Center and would necessitate a reduction in the hours that the Computer Learning Center is open.

Public Works Department

The Public Works Department has one part-time custodial position. The position is scheduled to work 15 hours per week and is assigned duties on Saturday and Sunday. The Public Works Director has indicated that there is not sufficient work on the weekend to warrant an increase in the hours of this position.

The Public Works Department uses contractual labor to supplement full-time staffing resources, particularly in the Gardens Division and the Right-of-Way Division. The proposed FY08 budget includes \$85,240 for contractual labor in these two divisions.

The Gardens Division's proposed budget for contractual labor is \$40,000. If a full-time position was added, the Public Works Director has indicated that this amount could be reduced to \$5,300—a reduction of \$34,700.

The Right-of-Way Division's proposed budget for contractual labor is \$45,240. If a full-time position was added, the Public Works Director has indicated that this amount could be reduced to \$12,000—a reduction of \$33,240.

The addition of two full-time positions in the Public Works Department would have a net cost of approximately \$30,000.

Recreation Department

As is customary in local government, the Recreation Department makes extensive use of part-time and seasonal employees. Seasonal employees are used during the summer months for the camp programs; as seasonal employees, the employees for these programs do not receive benefits.

The Recreation Department also uses part-time employees for the following functions:

- Coverage at the Community Center (reception desk, Game Room, and Teen Room)
- Coverage at the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center (after-school programs and facility supervision)

The part-time hours allocated to certain staff assigned to the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center could be aggregated to create a full-time facility attendant position. The net increase in cost would be approximately \$20,000. Part-time staff would still be required for the after-school program and fill-in facility coverage.

Both the County Council and the Planning Board are currently discussing their facilities, including the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center. Because of the layout and condition of the facility, Park and Planning staff is recommending transfer or demolition of the facility. Pending resolution of this matter, staff does not recommend the addition of a full-time position at the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center.

Communications

The Communications Office utilizes the services of interns, part-time employees, and professional service contractors. Interns and part-time employees assist departmental staff in televising Council meetings, in production of the various special events such as Independence Day Parade, the Folk Festival, the Street Festival, and the Jazz Festival, and editing, the most time-consuming task of all.

Some TV crew members are high school or college students while others are employed elsewhere and work with City TV to gain experience in television production and supplement their income. All have other time demands and are not available for every scheduled activity. It is essential to have a pool of trained crew to maintain coverage of evening and weekend community activities in addition to weekly nighttime Council meetings. Each special event requires from 7 to 15 crewmembers, and each Council meeting is generally staffed with three crewmembers. Therefore, aggregation of the hours allocated for part-time TV crewmembers would not meet the department's operational requirements.

That being said, the Cable TV portion of the communications office has about 1.5 FTEs and would benefit from more dedicated staff with more hours for editing and other TV production tasks. The cable operation would benefit from one additional full-time person to assist with editing as well as event coverage. If a full-time position were added, it is estimated that the part-time budget of \$26,800 could be reduced about \$10,000. The net cost of a full-time position with benefits would be approximately \$50,000.

The Communications Office also uses contractors for various professional services. Contractors serve as the producer of Snapshots, the editor of the City Newsletter, and the sound engineer for City TV. The producer of Snapshots and the editor of the City Newsletter are paid a set amount on a monthly basis to provide their respective services while the sound engineer is paid on an hourly basis on an as-needed basis. Other professional service work includes graphic design services, printing, writers and photographer services.

The use of contractors for the professional services referenced above serves the City's needs, and staff recommends that the City continue these arrangements. There is neither budget nor operational need to support these specialized professional positions at a full-time level.